

REMARKS

The present application was filed on June 21, 2001 with claims 1-29. Claims 2, 11, 13, 20 and 29 have been canceled. Claims 1, 3-10, 12, 14-19 and 21-28 remain pending. Claims 1, 12 and 19 are the pending independent claims.

In the outstanding Office Action dated May 2, 2005, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 3-10, 12, 14-19 and 21-28 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,678,719 (hereinafter “Stimmel”).

In this response, Applicants amend claims 1, 10, 12, 19 and 27. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

With regard to the rejection, independent claims 1, 12 and 19 have been amended to recite that the automatically collected presence information for each participant in the group is determined by the collaborative system through system monitored communicative actions associated with each participant. Support for the amendments can be found, for example, on page 5, line 25 through page 6, line 2, and page 21, lines 1-17 of the specification. Dependent claims 10 and 27 have been amended to correct minor errors in the claims.

Stimmel discloses a virtual workplace intercommunication tool. The Examiner contends that the participant’s status information in Stimmel provides sufficient disclosure to support anticipation of the presence information recited in the independent claims of the present invention. Applicants respectfully disagree. As disclosed in column 4, lines 38-60 of Stimmel, a participant’s status information such as “Do not disturb,” “Away from desk,” and “Out of the office,” is only established or changed by that participant. Thus, Stimmel fails to disclose the automatic collection of presence information for each participant in the group, wherein the presence information is determined by the collaborative system through system monitored communicative actions associated with each participant. Additionally, Stimmel fails to disclose a mechanism that enables a third party to set up a call.

Applicants assert that dependent claims 3-10, 14-18 and 21-28 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from independent claims 1, 12 and 19. Dependent claims 3-10, 14-18 and 21-28 also recite patentable subject matter in their own right.

In view of the above, Applicants believe that claims 1, 3-10, 12, 14-19 and 21-28 are in condition for allowance, and respectfully request withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection.

Respectfully submitted,



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